United Nations A/AC.109/2006/SR.3

General Assembly
session

Official Records

Distr.: General
8 June 2006

Original: English

Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Summary record of the 3rd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 27 April 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Hunte ..... (Saint Lucia)

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06-32912 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Draft report of the special mission to the Turks and Caicos Islands (A/AC.109/2006/CRP.1)

2. **The Chairman** drew attention to the draft report of the special mission to the Turks and Caicos Islands (A/AC.109/2006/CRP.1), which had taken place from 2 to 7 April 2006.

3. The draft report comprised four sections. Part I (Introduction) set out the special mission's terms of reference and composition, as well as acknowledgements. Part II (Information on the Territory) addressed the historical process leading to the constitutional review; the rejection by the administering Power of the options of free association and integration; and the response of the other Non-Self-Governing Territories administered by the United Kingdom to the latter's policy. Part III (Activities of the Mission) outlined the issues raised in the meetings between the special mission team and Government and opposition leaders, the Governor, the private sector, various Government commissions, students and the general public. Part IV (Conclusions) contained conclusions and observations regarding the political, economic and social situation in the Territory and what might be useful in accelerating the process of self-development and sustainable development.

4. The States members of the special mission had met with the Bureau earlier that week to discuss and further refine the draft report, which would be translated into all the official languages of the United Nations and published as a document of the Committee in time for the Committee's meetings in June. He would be meeting with the administering Power to discuss the findings of the special mission. Noting that in the past the reports of special missions had not been formally published in time for the Committee to have a substantive discussion on the findings, he said that the Bureau had agreed to convene a special meeting of the Committee to allow for such a discussion. The date of the meeting, which would be held in advance of the Pacific Regional Seminar, would be conveyed to the Committee shortly.

5. In the absence of any comments, he took it that the Committee wished to take note of the draft report of the special mission to the Turks and Caicos Islands.

6. *It was so decided.*

Pacific Regional Seminar (*continued*)

7. **The Chairman** said that preparations were under way for the Pacific Regional Seminar, which was scheduled to take place in Timor-Leste from 23 to 25 May 2006. He invited the Secretary of the Committee to brief members on the status of preparations.

8. **Mr. Cherniavsky** (Secretary of the Committee) said that invitations had been sent to all funded participants, including experts and NGOs; work had begun on preparing the travel arrangements for the Committee's official delegation; and replies had been received from some of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. He informed the Committee that, thus far, the United States Virgin Islands had confirmed its participation. Montserrat, Pitcairn and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), however, had declined.

9. In addition to the Committee's official delegation, he had received confirmation that China and Papua New Guinea would also be represented at the Seminar. As for the specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations, so far replies had been received from the International Monetary Fund and the Universal Postal Union, both of which had declined the Committee's invitation, and from the World Bank, which had accepted. Lastly, as the Committee was aware, some people had been invited in their personal capacity. In that regard, Mr. Joseph Bossano, Leader of the Opposition in Gibraltar, had confirmed that he would be attending as an observer, at his own expense.

10. The Secretariat was now trying to confirm what medical certificates and so on were required for funded participants to travel to Timor-Leste. The Secretariat was working very closely with the Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste, which he thanked once again for its support, assistance and generosity. The Secretariat and Permanent Mission would be working out the further details of arrangements for the Seminar.

11. **Mr. Maleki** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, being a relatively new Committee member, he would like to know what criteria were used to decide which Committee members took part in special missions and

regional seminars. As several of the Bureau members had been selected several times over, he wondered whether membership of the Bureau was a requirement for selection under the rules of procedure. In his view, the good thing about having fresh blood was that it brought new ideas and initiatives. He had heard that members were selected on the basis of the regional groups but, in his two years on the Committee, he had not seen such a procedure in practice.

12. **Mr. Cherniavsky** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the criteria used to select the members of the Committee's official delegation to the Seminar were very few and were well known to everyone. The first criterion was fair geographical representation, meaning that every regional group of the Committee should be represented. Of course, the Bureau members already represented their respective regional groups. It was up to the Committee and the Chairman to decide on the composition of the delegation. To help them in that task, the Secretariat prepared statistics to show which delegations had attended which seminar, in order to help ensure fair geographical representation.

13. The second criterion was rotation, meaning that all delegations should have a chance to attend seminars. In the past, there had been a tendency for Bureau members to attend all seminars in order to assist the Chairman in his functions. Some slots had also been given to the regional groups. He assured members, however, that the decision was completely in the hands of the Committee; the Secretariat was on hand merely to assist.

14. **The Chairman** said that every effort was made to ensure that the process was free and fair. There was no question at all of any favouritism. The current year, of course, was unique, as the substantially reduced budget had affected representation not only of the Committee but also of the Secretariat and certain countries in the Pacific. The Committee had basically had to decide whether it was prepared to hold a seminar with a reduced budget. As he had informed the Committee at its previous meeting (A/AC.109/2006/SR.2, para. 34), in a gesture of good faith, he would not be receiving daily subsistence allowance for the Seminar. He reassured the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran that everything was above board. He was more than happy to verify the procedure followed in previous years.

15. **Mr. Guterres** (Timor-Leste) informed the Committee that his Government was doing everything it could to provide the Seminar with the best facilities at its disposal. In terms of travel requirements, he said that no vaccinations were required to travel to Timor-Leste and a visa would be granted upon arrival. However, visitors to Timor-Leste were bound to spend at least one night in Bali, Indonesia, or Darwin, Australia, and he was unsure about their travel requirements. Lastly, he would be sending the Host Country Agreement to the Secretariat tomorrow.

16. **The Chairman** again expressed his appreciation to the Government of Timor-Leste for offering to host the 2006 Seminar in Dili and for its unprecedented generosity, without which it would not have been possible to host the Seminar in the Pacific.

Report of the observation mission of the referendum in Tokelau

17. **The Chairman** said that the report of the observation mission of the referendum in Tokelau was in the process of being finalized. The Chairman and the Bureau wished to request the Committee's permission to finalize the document and proceed with its issuance as an official document, before it was ratified by the Committee in due course. It was a short document that had unfortunately been held up with the administering Power. The Committee could rest assured that, if the Bureau was granted permission to proceed, it would do so, on the Committee's behalf, with the best intentions.

18. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee agreed to his request.

19. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.